

Date 8/23/91

2 August 1954

HRP 89-2

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Study Group

SUBJECT: CIA Relations to Operations Coordinating Board

The Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) was created by Executive Order in September, 1953, largely as a result of recommendations made by the President's Committee on International Information Activities (The Jackson Committee). It consists of the Under Secretary of State (Chairman), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of the Foreign Operations Administration, the Director of Central Intelligence and a representative of the President. This last post, which was held by C. D. Jackson, is now vacant. The Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Robert Cutler) sits with the Board and the Director of the USIA attends formal Board meetings. Other agencies assign representatives to meet with the Board when matters with respect to which they have responsibilities are under discussion.

The basic task of the Board is to assure the coordinated carrying out of policies and courses of action contained in National Security Council papers in cases in which the President designates the OCB as the coordinating agency. Approximately 25 NSC papers have been assigned to OCB to date. In addition, OCB has performed certain coordinating functions in relation to papers put out by the former Psychological Strategy Board. It has also undertaken to coordinate certain aspects of interdepartmental support of specific projects, e.g., the Berlin, Geneva and Caracas conferences, the UN etc.

The standard pattern of procedure, when an NSC paper is referred to the OCB, is to create a working group, usually under State Department chairmanship, composed of representatives of the member agencies plus USIA and, when appropriate, any other Departments or agencies directly concerned. These representatives are drawn from the operating levels. Meetings of these working groups in no way substitute for regular day-to-day interdepartmental liaison but supplement it. From time to time, a report on progress under each NSC paper is prepared for submission by the OCB to NSC. These reports cover a summary of actions taken in support of the NSC paper, an evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the policies from an operating point of view, and an estimate of emerging problems.

Each member of the OCB has designated one assistant, known as his Board Assistant, who is responsible, on a day-to-day basis, for the effective participation of his Agency in the operations of the Board.

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The OCB

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The OCB has no budget of its own; the State Department provides administrative support and the remaining expenses, including the cost of personnel, paid two-thirds by CIA and one-third by Defense. OCB has a small staff, mostly in the nature of a secretariat, which services the various working groups and does some independent work, largely in the information field, at the request of the working groups.

CIA has a dual role in relation to the OCB. It, along with other members of the intelligence community, provides intelligence support as needed. For example, when the OCB mechanism was watching for targets of opportunity during the past winter such as spotting food shortages where an offer of aid might result in a psychological advantage, CIA provided to the appropriate OCB working group, through intelligence officers on OCB staff, current information on conditions in threatened areas.

In addition, CIA covert operations are coordinated with operations of other agencies. There is a peculiar difficulty in this field. It is the nature of covert operations that they must be kept secret and revealed only on a strict need-to-know basis. Policy guidance to CIA is, of course, obtained from State and Defense through special channels established by NSC 5412. Cleared liaison channels have also been established with FOA and USIA. Under the terms of NSC 5412, the DCI advises the OCB as to major programs of covert operations. This is done orally at the luncheon of the OCB members before the regular weekly meeting. When a progress report to the NSC is prepared by the OCB, reporting actions taken to carry out the policies and courses of action specified by the NSC, CIA prepares a summary covert annex of its special operations in support of the NSC paper. This annex is prepared by the CIA member of the working group. It is sent, under appropriate security safeguards, to the various Board Members. At the lunch before the Board meeting at which a progress report is to be considered, the DCI is prepared to amplify or discuss the contents of the CIA summary annex. After the meeting, the summaries are returned to CIA. When the progress report is considered by the NSC, the DCI makes an oral report on relevant CIA covert operations. This is in addition to his regular quarterly oral report on covert operations to the NSC.

Thus, while covert operations are not discussed at the lower levels of the OCB mechanism, coordination is achieved by (1) regular interdepartmental liaison, (2) by discussion of major programs with the OCB (3) by separate annexes to OCB reports to NSC, and (4) oral reports to the NSC.

While a few of the CIA representatives on working groups (of which there are thirty odd) come from the DD/I side of CIA, the overwhelming majority come from the area and functional divisions of DD/P and from the PP Staff. The DCI's Board Assistant, whose function is to keep the

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mechanism rolling so far as CIA is concerned, is [redacted]  
who is Special Assistant to the DCI. He also meets weekly with  
the other Board Assistants to review matters coming before the Board  
and to take care of matters which do not require the personal atten-  
tion of the Board Members. He has no staff except a secretary.

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Special Assistant to the Director

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